

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Osame Manago, 87, hotel owner

"People used to come to Kona to sell all sorts of things, but the drivers for these people couldn't stay with them [at the Paris Hotel]. And since they didn't have any place to stay, they asked me if they could stay at our shop for a cheap price. So we bought a couple of small single beds and put them in the extra space we had, and we started letting those drivers stay."

Osame (Nagata) Manago was born on April 16, 1894, in a farming community located in Fukuoka-ken, Japan. Because she had no brothers, she and her four sisters learned to plant and harvest rice and do many of the chores usually assigned to sons. She also attended school for five years and learned to sew.

In 1913, Osame arrived in Kona, Hawaii to marry Kinzo Manago, a cook employed by the Wallace family. To supplement her husband's income, she helped with the Wallace's laundry and housecleaning and embroidered fine linens. During the coffee season, she found work as a coffee bean sorter at the Captain Cook Coffee Mill.

In 1915, Osame gave birth to her first child. Later, Osame and Kinzo opened a small coffee shop that eventually became the Manago Hotel in 1917.

For more than 50 years, Osame and her husband continued to operate the hotel. Today, Osame, mother of eight, grandmother to 31, and great-grandmother to 17, participates in senior citizen activities and occasionally travels to the Mainland and Japan. Son, Harold, and grandson, Dwight Manago, now manage the hotel.

Tape No. 9-19-1-80 TR

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Osame Manago (OM)

November 24, 1980

Honolulu, Hawaii

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

[NOTE: Interview conducted in Japanese. Translation done by Mako Mantzel.]

MK: Interview with Mrs. Osame Manago in Honolulu, Hawaii on November 24, 1980. When were you born, Mrs. Manago?

OM: I was born on the 16th of April, in Meiji 24 (1891).

MK: What's the name of the place where you were born?

OM: Tomiyasu, Miyanojin-mura, Kurume-shi, Fukuoka-ken. And my father's name was Tsurukichi Nagata. And my mother's name was Omoyo.

MK: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

OM: I had five sisters. [We were] all girls.

MK: Oba-san, what number child, were you?

OM: I was the fourth.

MK: What was your parents' job?

OM: They were farmers, big farmers.

MK: What kind of farmers were they, what did they do?

OM: We grew rice, only rice. We didn't have many hatake [fields used for crops other than rice] just a little in the back. But we made good rice. And even the straw was good; they were about this long.

MK: They were as long as four shaku [shaku = 30 cm.] . . .

OM: With the straw we made goza and rice bags and all sorts of ropes, and we also used the straw to cover the roofs, though nowadays we use tiles, but in those days--we used straw. Really good straw was

available then. They were this long, but nowadays they are this short. They were long in the old days.

MK: About three shaku.

OM: Yes. Four, five--four shaku they were. But they are about two shaku now. Because people don't use straw to make rope, the plants have been made shorter and shorter. And we used to plant rice--like this in the field in the old days--but nowadays people use machines, so there is only this much [distance between the plants] . . .

MK: It's close . . .

OM: It's close. They are planted by machine. In our time, we used to plant the rice seedlings one by one along the ropes which were set from one end of the field to the other. And when we had five people working together, we had five rows being planted at the same time. And the field had to look neat horizontally, vertically, diagonally, from any direction. And when we finished one line, we went on to the next one, after measuring it correctly. And when we came to the end of the field, the work was completed. And after four weeks or so, the seedlings, which had looked fragile, would settle more securely in the soil. Then we had to weed, like this, holding the seedlings like this and putting them back in the soil again securely. And then again in about three weeks or so, the weeds would be growing again, and the plants would be big, and we would have to weed again. If people did not work hard, the grass grew tall. Since there weren't any chemicals [to kill weeds] like nowadays, the grass grew tall. We had to weed by hand, and soon we lost our nails. We did it like this in mud. And then, after three to four weeks, the ground got hard, preventing the roots of the plants from growing. So we used the tool called ganzume [a coal-trimming rake], it looks like this, using it like this, by hand, like this, turning it upside down.

MK: You put it in straight at first and turn it upside down?

OM: With the ganzume, yes. And after about three weeks, this time we started from the opposite side, making the entire field soft. We used to do this twice. And, working with this ganzume and mud, although we had scarves, our faces became wet and sticky with mud. But we had to do this, since we were farmers. And there were worms, the kind which stick to you and suck your blood, I remember. That was the way it was when I was young. But when I was about twenty years old, this ganzume became mechanized. It [the mechanized tool] looked like the tip of a broom and moved like this. I was so happy to see it, and I tried it, pushing it across the field. It turned around and around and worked pretty well. In those days, it was the [said with emphasis] machine, but now it's gotten bigger. And about September or so, the plants would have finished growing and they would have grain. And all the water which had been vital for the rice to grow would be all gone to the river by September or October, and the ground would be dry and hard. And the rice would turn yellow and become plump by the end

of October. And it was beautiful to see them, waving in the wind "sarasara, sarasara." Although they'd started as five seedlings or so, by this time they'd become this big (gestures). We used to say "Oh, what a beautiful crop," while looking at our rice, which was better than that of our neighbors. But when a typhoon would hit the rice paddies the plants would fall, damaging more than half of the crop. But when a typhoon didn't hit, they would grow beautifully.

And the inekari [rice harvest] began when the ground became dry and hard. We used sickles, like this, using both hands, putting the ones we cut aside. And two or three days later, we tied them together with ropes or straws, like this. And we took them to where three or four goza were hung on bamboo [poles] about this high, which were supported by ropes, front and back, so they wouldn't fall in a strong wind. And there was something like a table, about this big, with holes, and women were working around it, pounding the grain off the stalks. I carried the rice stalks on my shoulder to this place. My father used to toss the stalks over to the side after they had pounded it. About the time we had pounded about ten sacks of rice off the stalks, the sun was usually setting. And it used to get windy at this time, and, taking advantage of this wind, my father and us, my sisters, worked together: my father threshed the rice, shaking the rice stalks, and the wind blew the hulls away; and we sisters measured the rice and put it into sacks, tying each with a rope, and we pushed it [the bags] from both sides, using our feet "ton, ton," to pack the bags. And we put those sacks, sometimes five sacks or even eight sacks, on the cart and went home.

And when I was young we'd pack all the sacks together and we sisters, my older sisters and I, would head for home because it was supertime. And after we finished supper, we used to go out and work again. We would go out to work again and in the field we'd line up the cut ricestalk bundles and tie them securely with straw so that the rain or wind would not affect the bundles. So it would be okay if it rained or got windy. That was our night work, under the moon. It was after that work that we came home and finally took a bath and went to bed. And my father didn't like it for us to work too late into the night and be late for work in the morning. So we used to tell him to go on ahead, take a bath and go to bed early. And he used to say, "Are you going out to work again?"

We would say, "Yes, a little while, since it's as bright as daytime with the moon up like this. We can't waste it staying at home doing nothing." We felt sorry for my father since all he had was daughters. So we worked hard. We almost worked 24 hours a day.

MK: [Your father only] had girls and you, girls, did all sorts of work.

OM: Yes, all girls. My father used to say that he felt sorry for us, too, since he didn't have a son. But we worked as much as men. We didn't fall behind [in our work] just because we were women, we

didn't need kōkua from others. We kōkuaed each other. We used to plan when to work, and where to work, by ourselves. [To keep father from worrying] we used to tell our father we would be working only a little while when he went out. When we had to soften the ground, we dug up the ground with hoes, turning the soil upside down. We'd work until late at night wearing koshimaki [Japanese kimono underwear]. We didn't use a horse.

MK: Didn't you have people working for you, since your father was a big farmer?

OM: That was when we got a little older. We had a helper who worked with a horse--he was about 16 years old--because my father was getting old and couldn't work with the horse anymore. But when he [OM's father] was working with the horse, I used to work with him too, grabbing the horse's nose sometimes.

MK: How many tsubo [tsubo = 3.954 sq. yds] was the farm?

OM: The rice field was one chō [2.45 acres] and maybe three or four tan [tan = .245 acre]. One chō, I'm not sure how many acres that it is, but probably ten acres. And there was a small field to grow vegetables. People used to tell me enviously that we were lucky to have that field to grow potatoes, squash, and so on. My mother grew those vegetables and often used to distribute them to the neighbors.

My parents were nice people, but they didn't have a son. They used to have a son, but he died when he was 18, on the 15th of August of the year he turned eighteen. I heard that he was a good singer. His name was Sataro, and when people heard him sing, they used to say, "That's Sataro-san singing, he must be going to the field." But he died at night of a high fever, I heard. We used to have a big field, about two tan and five se [se = 118.6 sq. yds.] Anyway, my parents went out there, stepping in his footprints, which were clear when all the water dried up. They were trying to feel their son's, Sataro's feet. This is what I heard. I didn't know my brother, since I was born much later. He was the second child. My father was always saying, "I wish he were still alive. If only he were still alive." (pause) [That made us feel that] we must work even harder.

MK: Did you work hard in the vegetable field, as well as in the rice paddy?

OM: Whether I was working in the rice paddy or the vegetable field, I worked so hard that I didn't care how I looked. People used to call me "Onagoyama," as if I were a sumo wrestler. They used to call me "Nagatas' Onagoyama." And I used to go into the mountains even at night to collect firewood. And since we only owned fields, not mountains, it was hard to find firewood. But I used to go at night and cart it to our house, which had a second floor, where we kept the firewood. I used to toss the firewood to my sister who was standing on the second floor. She caught the wood and stored

it. Although I was not very big and had a difficult time unloading it from the cart, I used to manage to get enough firewood to fill the storage area.

MK: You said you lived in a large house. How large was it?

OM: The house was quite large. It had an eight-jo room, a six-jo room, storage room, the kitchen, the front room where the main door was, and the guest room, which was an eight-jo room with a toko-no-ma and a butsudan for the hotoke-sama. It was a big house. I will show you a pretty picture next time you come. It was a nice house.

Things have changed now; rice planting is done by machine; so is plowing. You don't need a pick, a hoe or a sickle. You don't even have to spray chemicals either. We had a horse. And we used to spread its dung on mushiro [thick straw mats] and dry it for manure in the field. We also used to use human feces. Not now, but in those days, we used to use it as fertilizer. We used to go out and buy it and carry it in a cart. We called it shirimochi [shiri= buttocks; mochi=rice cakes]. We took them some rice, for making mochi, in return for the manure. The public health department will not allow using human feces for manure anymore. It's hard to believe what we did in those days. I guess I lived right in the middle between the old generation and the new generation.

MK: Agriculture has been modernized so fast . . .

OM: Yes, that's true. Everything is done by machines: planting, spreading fertilizers, and spraying chemicals by airplane to prevent weeds from growing. [The farmers] don't have to do anything. In the old days, we had to pump the water up to the field by foot, like this. But nowadays, there's a machine sitting in the corner of the field, and when the switch is turned on, water gushes in rapidly automatically. And for harvesting, machines do everything, from the beginning to the end. The rice stalks are taken out and neatly packed. And to make ten sacks is nothing. And one tan used to be a large field, but nowadays it has to be five tan in order to use these machines. And today's [rice] sacks look so good; it's magnificent.

MK: Do your relatives still do farming in Fukuoka-ken?

OM: All my relatives are still farmers, and they are all doing fine. They have huge and beautiful houses, which used to be made of straw, which were beautiful even then since they were rich, but the houses are even more beautiful now with tile roofs. These types of houses are everywhere.

MK: It's changed now, hasn't it?

OM: Yes. So people who are in my generation know very well what's good and bad.

MK: Did you go to school when you were growing up?

OM: Yes. I went as high as the fourth grade. And I wanted to continue my education, but my father said, "You are only a farmer's daughter. What good does it do to get more education for working in the fields or for business? If you can sign your name, that's enough." My neighbor was a doctor, and his daughter was a friend of mine, and she was going to high school. So I wanted to go, too. And my father said that people were going to laugh at me if I, a farmer's daughter went to a high school. But he allowed me to go one more year, to the fifth grade. So I did.

After that, as I was a girl, I was taught how to sew, and so forth, since that was what we were expected to do. I don't mean to brag about it, but I at least learned how to sew clothes for myself. I went for four years. Do you know kasuri [a kimono material]? My hometown is famous for that, and I learned how to weave this kasuri properly. The [kasuri] patterns have to be straight, not this way or that way, you know? My sister taught me how to do it. And also, my mother taught me how to make shibori, a material which is tie dyed. I learned these things in winter, when we farmers did not work in the fields. And there were many different kinds of kimonos in Japan awase, hito, and haori, not to mention the different kinds of obi. And my mother taught me all these things, since she wanted me to learn them before I got married. And she sent me to sewing teachers also. That's why I can do almost anything that a woman is supposed to do, sewing my own clothes and so forth.

My parents really had a hard time raising us five girls, all girls, and they wanted us to marry into good homes. And they had to marry us off according to our ages, the older ones first. And since my oldest sister died, the second one took a yōshi [a son-in-law who takes his wife's family name] to carry on our family name. And the next one married, and so did the one next to her. And since we were all well known as hard workers, even when we were still very young, rich farmers--we were all farmers--came to ask us to marry into their families, even though we were not the greatest beauties.

(Laughter)

They were all taken as wives by prosperous farmers. So they all married farmers. That's why they remained farmers, though they are all dead now. The last one died in November, last year, at the age of ninety. So I'm all alone now, I had a younger sister, but she died of uterine cancer at about the age of 40, leaving three children. So I'm left all by myself.

MK: You are the only one living?

OM: Yes, the only one, since last year. I went back to Japan this July for Bon. When I last saw her [OM's sister] was in November, last year. She even came to the airport to greet me. And when I was leaving, we said, "Take care," to each other. But shortly after that she became ill and died--three weeks after I left Japan. I

received a telegram but I decided not to go to the funeral then because I was planning to return for O-bon in July to pay my respects to the deceased. That's why I went this year, in July. So all my sisters are dead.

But my older sister's son upholds the family name. He has a big house and is doing fine. And since there is an only daughter and no son in his family, they again had to get a yōshi. She [OM's nephew's wife] used to be a schoolteacher, and the husband has been working for the prefectural office of Fukuoka-ken for almost thirty years. My niece quit her job working in a school and is now very active as chairman of a women's organization, doing lots of things like visiting various schools. They adopted a child since they didn't have their own. They have a beautiful house.

MK: So they are keeping the family name.

OM: Yes. In my hometown, there are two families with people as old as I am. The rest of the people are of younger generations. I'm the only one living. No, there is another one. My neighbor, the doctor family, they had a yōshi, and he's still alive. So there are two families left. The rest are all gone. So when people want to know about the old days, they say, "Go to Nagata [OM] and ask." And they come to me.

MK: Because you've lived so long.

OM: Yes. There are only two families left which have people as old as I am. The old people are all gone. I had nice friends. I haven't seen any of those friends although I've been to Japan 22 times. I heard that a couple of them were still alive about five years ago, but they are dead now.

MK: What did you used to do with friends when you were growing up?

OM: All my friends were farmers' daughters. And all of them left home and worked at shops or restaurants and so on. I was the only one who stayed home and did farming, since my father told me that a farmer's daughter should remain a farmer. I was the only one who did farming, and the others went away to work somewhere else.

MK: What did you think you would want to do, once you grew up, when you were young?

OM: Well, when most girls were out wearing nice clothes, my father wanted me to work hard instead. Thinking of the hard work I did as a youngster, I didn't think I would be able to marry into a good family, and I disliked farming and regarded farming a harsh [life]. But my mother used to sell rice to a middleman to get money to secretly make me a kimono or two, koshimaki and yukata, so I felt that I had to stay as a farmer. Because of her, I couldn't leave home. She used to tell me not to envy other girls going out with their nice kimonos on, that she would take me wherever I wanted to go, if I really wanted to go and if I worked hard.

MK: You stayed in Japan until you were 19, didn't you? And your husband, Mr. Manago, came to Hawaii when he was 16, is that right?

OM: Yes. And I got married [for the first time] when I was 17. My father had a brother, and they were the only sons in his family. I was married to my father's brother's, [that is] my uncle's wife's nephew. I didn't want to marry him. His house was very close to my house. He was a handsome man, but I didn't quite like him. I just didn't feel comfortable with him. I actually disliked him. But if I didn't marry him, my father would have lost face. My parents told me I could come back if I couldn't stand him, but I should stay for at least three days. So I went for three days, just to save face for my father. I came back at midnight on the third day. The distance between his house and my house must have been from here [McCully] to Waikiki [approximately one mile]. I was crying and crying when I was to marry him, I didn't want to marry him, but I had to, to save my father's face and the relationship between my father and his brother. My parents wanted me to help them save the relationship, even if it was for only three days. I had to marry him. So I did. And I came back home three days later, lying to the [groom's] family that I was going to go to the toilet. I opened the door to go out, although there was a toilet in the house. That was a night with a full moon. It was September. I hated that place so much that I thought all my anger and hatred would gush out. I really didn't want to stay, . . . (tape inaudible) That was when people were busy pounding rice, and I helped with the work too, wearing work clothes which my mother had given me.

Anyway, I was there for a while, and came back home about midnight. It was September, and the soldiers were practicing war in the field, and they were making a lot of noise, "pata-pata-pata, pata-pata-pata" that scared me a lot. And there was a cemetery on the way back to my home. Although I was scared of the soldiers and the cemetery, I told myself that I had to go home. I was even barefoot. So I got home, and I tried to open the door to the main room, calling, "Mom, mom." And probably my mom had been worrying about me. She called my name, "Is that you, Osame?" I said, "Yes, it's me." She was glad to see me home, and as she opened the door she said, "Oh, you are home, it's all right, it's all right. It must have been hard for you. I'm sorry that you had to go through this, but it's all right, now you're home."

I gave my parents a hard time. Since our field and theirs [the family OM was supposed to marry into] were next to each other, we had to work far away from them, so they wouldn't see us. I felt bad for my parents, and I thought I should have stayed, [with the groom] but I just couldn't help disliking the guy. That's why I told my mother that I wanted to leave Japan and go somewhere far away from home. And my mother tried to comfort me, saying that I shouldn't say things like that, and there would be other chances to marry somebody nicer. But I insisted that I should go somewhere far away, somewhere like Hawaii. And my eldest sister's husband,

who was a yōshi, had left for Hawaii island when their baby was 30 days old, and had been missing since then. So I wanted to come here and find him for my sister. And I don't know how the Managos knew about me, but they wanted me as a bride, because they thought I was a hard worker and suited for the Manago family, I guess although I was not the greatest beauty.

MK: When I first talked to you, you told me that you had a ceremony before you married Manago--[that is, for the earlier marriage]. What kind of ceremony did you mean?

OM: Well, we simply exchanged sakazuki [sake in sake cups] to say we would be married, and there wasn't any wedding ceremony. Since it was a trial marriage, we simply exchanged sakazuki. It was something like I was stolen from my family temporarily, so it was not a legal marriage, but a trial one. Otherwise my parents wouldn't have agreed to the marriage. They thought I was too young. I was 17 then. So the matchmaker arranged it the way we wanted. I didn't wear formal clothes, just everyday ones, and we exchanged sakazuki. That was it. So I went to his house, stayed there for three nights, and came back home. His house was very close to my house. I went there just to save face for my parents. Because I didn't want my parents and his parents to fight. I felt bad for my parents after I came home, because his family's home was so close, and they all belonged to the same temple we did. So my parents had to deal with them in everyday life. But I just couldn't help but dislike the guy, you know? That's the reason I wanted to come to Hawaii, and decided to.

I stayed with my family for a year or so, and during that time there were quite a few proposals for marriage, but I now think Hawaii must have been the place for me and good luck for me, although there were some difficult times. My husband's family [Manago family] was pretty rich, so when I said that I would marry him, my father's brother was not very happy, saying that our family didn't match up with Manago's, and he would feel uncomfortable. But he [OM's uncle] said to my father to go ahead if that was what my father wanted to do. So my father's younger brother didn't attend the marriage ceremony. It was a splendid ceremony, but a proxy one; it was a wedding by photograph. All my relatives attended the ceremony except this brother. And I stayed with the Managos for ten months.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: You were saying that the Manago family had a big estate.

OM: Yes, it was in Kokubu, Kurume-shi, where there was a big military camp. And they were all rich. My husband had two brothers, one older, one younger. When he married me, he received some property

because he'd become a married man. And the [Manago's] estate was so big, to go to the military camp we didn't have to step on anybody else's property, it was all theirs [Manago's]. They had a big nursery, as large as seven tan. They had a nursery business in addition to their farming. They had five or six men working for the nursery. Those men used to wrap the trees and take them to the train station, where they were taken to Osaka or Tokyo. The trees used to fill three or four freight cars. And there was a big kura [storage house] on this big estate. There were also houses which were detached from the main house for military officers and their wives to stay in. And from the military camp, they used to send horses for them, to and from the camp. There were about two or three houses like that, although I never looked inside. They were for rent. Our house had a large zashiki [main room] and a detached house. And there were a younger brother, and a sister who was nine years old then, when I got married.

MK: Mr. Manago was the second son of a wealthy family, wasn't he?

OM: Yes, that's right. So people were wondering if Manago, my husband, really did go to Hawaii because he was too rich to go someplace like Hawaii to work. But my husband had a cousin who was living in Canada. When he [Manago] finished high school, he applied to go to Canada to study English, but kept this secret from the family. His parents tried to stop him after he was accepted, saying he should stay home, that he had no reason to go to Canada. But he wanted to go, once he was accepted. So he left home with four or five of his friends. And when they landed in Honolulu, where they had to change ships and were waiting temporarily, one of his friends gambled away money that he had borrowed from my husband, and they were all stuck without even a nickel. And apparently there was a yadoya called Fukuoka-ya, named after Fukuoka-ken, so they stayed there that night and he [Manago] wrote a letter to his cousin in Canada. The cousin sent \$20 in gold right away for use in Honolulu, and he [OM's husband] used it as pocket money in Honolulu. And this friend who had lost the money in gambling disappeared without repaying the money. He [OM's husband] was at a loss and asked Fukuoka-ya if there was anybody from Fukuoka that he knew. And he found Ishibashi-san, I think that was his name, and he told my husband that he [OM's husband] did have a relative on Hawaii. So he [OM's husband] got the address and decided to go there to Hawaii island.

MK: Then, a person named Shikada was . . .

OM: Yes. Shikada-san was one of his relatives. And Nishimura-san was the brother of Mrs. Shikada. So Mrs. Shikada introduced Nishimura-san to my husband. And he [Mr. Nishimura] said, "Oh, so you're Manago. In the old days I used to visit your place." Shikada-san was a mechanical engineer.

MK: He was an engineer at Captain Cook [Coffee Company] . . .

- OM: Yes, he was. And Nishimura-san was growing pineapples somewhere up there [Kona], although I didn't understand very well. Anyway, he was. And my husband was hired and worked for him, growing pineapples. So he didn't get to go to Canada?
- MK: So he was 16 when he was on his way to Canada. But a friend of his spent his money, so he decided to go to Kona. Is that right?
- OM: Yes, the friend didn't pay back the money, so the \$20 in gold came from [his cousin in] Canada immediately. And he went to the Big Island looking for Shikada-san.
- MK: So he went to see Shikada-san and met Nishimura-san.
- OM: Yes, since they were brothers [-in-law].
- MK: And he [Manago] worked for him [Nishimura]?
- OM: Yes. He worked for Nishimura-san, growing pineapples. And I think he landed at Ka'u, not Hilo when he landed on Hawaii island. He landed at a place with a name that sounded like "Honapu," and it was very stormy, so stormy that he had to be taken by the hand to get off the boat, so he told me. (Laughs) So he landed at Ka'u, where there was a sugar mill in a very high place. And he came here [Kona] and went to see Shikada-san. And then he stayed with Nishimura-san off and on and became friends by the time I arrived. He also became a cook at a white person's house. So, in the end, he didn't go to America.
- MK: And while he was working for Nishimura-san, there was a white man, Mr. Wallace, that he worked for as a cook from 1906 . . .
- OM: Yes. Yes.
- MK: How did he get to know Mr. Wallace and become a cook for him?
- OM: Yes, he became a cook for Mr. Wallace. He cooked for Wallace and after he saved some money, he called for me.
- MK: And it was a shashin-kekkon [picture marriage], wasn't it?
- OM: Yes, it was a shashin-kekkon. I only looked at his picture. I couldn't meet him in person. I came to Honolulu on the ship called Siberia, a small ship, 18,000 tons. My parents came to Nagasaki to see me off. My father was thinking of marrying me to his brother [his brother's relative] if I didn't pass the immigration inspection. But I was determined to go to Hawaii, because I didn't like him at all. So I really wanted to come here.
- MK: So, your parents came to see you off at Nagasaki. Was that around 1913 when you got on the Siberia? How did you feel?

OM: Yes, on the Siberia. I was thinking about nothing but coming here. I didn't think about anything else. And at the inspection in Nagasaki, my eyes were fine, but I had hookworms. So I was suspended in Nagasaki for a week. My mother went home, leaving my father with me, saying she would be back when I got rid of the hookworms. She came back a few days later. And I passed the inspection this time, so I could go. And at the inspection site, where we had our stool examined, a person gave me somebody else's stool, which didn't have hookworms. The person told me to keep it in my obi and switch it with my own stool. But a haole was watching me when I was using the bathroom, so it was impossible to switch, you know? A person who'd come back from America, who helped arrange my going to Hawaii, told me to eat a lot of nuts which apparently made it difficult for the microscope to find the worms. So I ate quite a lot of these nuts which my mother roasted for me. So I couldn't switch the stool, since I was being watched. I couldn't even urinate. So I gave up, and I took my own to be inspected. And I must have been lucky; I was told that there weren't any hookworms, so I passed and I could go. My mother and father were very happy, and they filled up a bag called a shingenbukuro [cloth pouch] with persimmons, pears, candies, and senbei, and so many other goodies. They said that I would be on board for one week to ten days, would be lonely, and that I should eat all of them.

And when I got on board, the ship was filled with Chinese, and the odor was so bad that I couldn't possibly eat anything. And I got seasick and felt so bad I couldn't eat anything. They told me to lie down where there were hammocks all lined up. These were not beds. Although there were beds, there were small thin futons on cots made of iron. There was a woman sleeping next to me, and since she didn't get seasick, I asked her to eat what I had since I thought it would be better than throwing it away. While lying down, feeling sick, I had to listen to her eat, making an awful sound, gari-gari. But there was nothing I could do except to comfort myself. I thought that she deserved the food since she'd been taking care of me, bringing water for me, etc., and I might as well give the food away; otherwise, they'd have had to be thrown away anyway. A person named Nagata from Kumamoto-ken, was very kind and she brought me some udon. She said it was a good thing to eat when seasick. And she also brought some medicine for seasickness when I couldn't even raise my head. She told me what day it was and how many more days it was going to take [to get to Hawaii]. And since I didn't sleep well days and nights, I felt a day was so long that it felt I had been bedridden for a month. And the ninth day or the tenth day, I guess, she came and told me that we were to land the next day, that I shouldn't be lying around but should go up to the deck. She took me to the deck and told me not to look behind, but forward, she told me that the cool wind would make me feel better. She told me to stay there. She brought me manjū, you know, Pāke manjū [Chinese buns with bean-jam filling] and water. She was so kind to me that I felt so happy. And she told me that we'd be arriving tomorrow and that there was a furo on the boat, so I should clean myself up a little. She was so nice to me. And there was Misao-san, who now lives in Hamakua but was from a town

close to my own hometown. She also came to see me, to help choose what kimono I should wear when I got off the boat and she took the kimono out of the yanagi-gōri for me. So I landed.

MK: At Honolulu.

OM: Yes. I landed at Honolulu. But I had to stay in this dark and spacious house, where I got scared when I saw an older man with a big protruding belly like this (OM gestures) and a big broom, coming slowly toward me. I was alone then everybody else had left. A person who was next to me, who came from Yamaguchi-ken, I think had something wrong with her eyes, but, whatever the reason, she was to be sent back [to Japan]. She was taken to the place where those who had to be sent back were kept. She took her yanagi-gōri with her. And I--(interruption: OM talking to a family member)--stayed in this dark and spacious place and slept on a bunk bed. And I can't forget how good the food tasted at that time. There was rice and eggplants. There was eggplant nishime and a slice of watermelon. The deliciousness of the food at that time! My, you can't imagine how good they tasted at that time, even now I can never forget that. I hadn't eaten anything on board for ten days, you know? They were really tasty!

There I was told by Mr. Katsunuma that the boat to Hawaii had just left, and it would have to make a circle before coming back to Honolulu to pick me up, and that would be two weeks later. He told me to be patient. So there I was, having to wait for the boat to return. There was another person who'd come on an earlier boat and was waiting for the boat. So we, the two of us, were left in this huge place. And we slept in places that were like shelves for silkworms. And every day, for two weeks, having nothing to do, we looked out the window, wishing for the boat to come. There was nothing we could do about it. We saw trains with smoke coming out of their smokestacks, making some kind of big noise. And this old kanaka jii-san, a janitor, came to clean up the place. I couldn't understand what he was saying, you know? We just felt so bad that we regretted we'd come, and felt that we wouldn't have come if we had known what it would be like. We were saying that. But the two weeks passed, and since the boat was coming the next day Mr. Katsunuma came to tell us, "Fukuoka-ken-ra, tomorrow, they're [husbands are] coming so you shouldn't worry." And finally the day came. When that day came I showed my husband's photo and my photo. Somebody told me that there was a man with a broad forehead and another one a bit shorter, and he asked me which one would be my husband. I had my husband's picture with me, so I showed it to him. He said, "Oh, this one, with the broad forehead, who looks intelligent. This one has the air of a business man." And we met, we were introduced to each other by Mr. Katsunuma. He told us that I had come all the way to Hawaii, so we should take care of each other and work hard. And he made us hold each other's hand there. And after we left the place, we went to Izumo Taisha [Izumo Shrine is believed to give good luck in marriage], where we, two couples, had a ceremony conducted by a Shintō priest. We exchanged marriage sakazuki. Then we went to Fukuoka-ya and stayed there for two days, waiting for the boat.

MK: How did you feel when you first met Mr. Manago?

OM: Well, what could I say, I said to him that I came all the way [from Japan] to be with him, and that his parents had told me to bring him back [to Japan]. I said that I was going to work hard so I could take him back as soon as possible. He said that he was going to work hard in order to get back and that he'd been feeling sorry for what he'd done, deceiving his parents in coming here. He said that we should work hard together. He also said that he shouldn't have come if he'd known that he was to stay in Hawaii, that he originally left Japan to go to Canada instead of Hawaii, and that he'd worried his parents. He said that his dreams hadn't come true. He was saying that. It seemed that he really had wanted to go to Canada to study English.

MK: So you went to Kona after staying at Fukuoka-ya for a few days, is that right?

OM: Yes. I went to Kona. But the boat which we took to Kona was something else. We were put together with horses and cattle. And we had to put our own blankets on pieces of boards which were arranged for us. We couldn't lie down, we had to be sitting up all the way to Kona. We left that day at noon and arrived at 6 [o'clock] in the morning the next day.

MK: What was the name of the boat?

OM: Oh, I don't know the name of the boat, but cattle, horses, and humans were put in the same place.

MK: Can you remember how much the fare was?

OM: No, I don't know. My husband paid it. I was only wondering how can we go [to Kona] on a boat like that. I remember that clearly, cow dung, etc. I asked my husband if that was how we were going. And it was. I went sitting on the boards, leaning against my yanagi-gōri. My husband told me that everything, people, cattle, cargo went together and even if you asked for more room, there was no room.

MK: So, where did the ship land?

OM: It landed at Kona. I mean it arrived offshore of Kona and a canoe, you know, a little boat, came to get us. They handed me down to a canoe with a count of "One, two, three." Like this, "One, two, three"

MK: They lowered you down . . .

OM: They got me down into the canoe. They did the same to my husband and to my yanagi-gōri. That's how we came in those days. It was really pitiful.

MK: Did you land at Kailua?

OM: Yes. I mean offshore of Kailua. And there was a Kailua landing which was made of lumber, that's where the canoe landed. And the canoe is lower than that [landing], so they pulled my hands while the others were pushing me up, and I came out of the canoe. Really. And for the cattle and horses, they tied them by the neck to the canoe and let them swim (gestures), then they would lift them up, you know what I'm talking about.

MK: Things were different then.

OM: Yes. So we arrived at Kailua about 6 o'clock in the morning. And there was a small restaurant. We rested there for a while and waited for a person who was supposed to come down from ma uka and pick us up. I washed my face and changed my clothes, since I had been told that there would be a celebration party because we had married. I put on my lilac montsuki [crested kimono] with a pretty obi and was ready to go up. And there he came down with a horse, you know a carriage with four poles standing up like this. And I was told to hold on to one of them [poles]. A driver sat in the front seat, and we the two of us, sat in the back. And there was a cover. And since the road was full of rocks, it was rough and we had to hold on. And guava trees [branches] came like this [hit the carriage], "Whap! Whap! Whap!" We were sitting very close to each other, holding on to the poles. We were told not to stick our faces out since we'd get hurt. Really it was terrible. We arrived at 6 [o'clock], but when we got up to Captain Cook, you know, it was 12 [o'clock p.m.], when we finished the gatan, gatan [jolting] ride. The horse finally got there.

So we arrived at a place a little beyond ours, near where Nishimura-san was staying. And because it was a wedding celebration, everybody was waiting for us there. They stood in front of the house, saying, "Welcome back, Mr. Manago," to my husband, and "Welcome, you must be exhausted!" to me. And when the party started, it was just like Japan. Everybody was dancing and singing, just having a jolly good time. And everybody was very kind to me from the time I arrived. And the next morning we went on foot to introduce me to the Wallaces, where my husband was working. There wasn't a car then so we walked. The Wallaces were a couple and their daughter. And I was welcomed there, too. They were so pleased to see me that they hugged me and patted me many times, saying, "Good bride, good bride." (Chuckles) They told me to think of their house as Manago's house, that I should come back again soon.

MK: How did you feel when you first saw haoles and kanakas, since you'd never seen them before in Japan?

OM: In Japan, there was a woman who lived across the street from our house who had gone to America a couple times. And this woman used to show me some pictures, like the one of a woman with a beautiful big hat decorated with feathers and lots of stuff. I was young

then, that was even before I got married. While looking at the pictures, I dreamed of myself wearing bright dresses like that, pāpales like that, shoes like those, once I arrived in Hawaii. I wished that I could go to Hawaii once in my lifetime. That's what I thought at the time; besides, my parents were having a hard time with the relatives because of me. I thought if I'd gone somewhere far away, my father and uncle would get along again. That's why I came to Hawaii. My mom tried to stop me and said that I shouldn't worry so much, that there would be somebody who would want me for a bride soon, that I should stay in Japan (OM voice shaking). But I thought those brothers, my father and uncle, would forget about me once I was gone and would get along again. I was ashamed for my father and I wanted to [repay my debts somehow and] work very hard in Hawaii. And if and when I should go back to Japan, I wanted people to look up to me. I was determined to stay [in Hawaii] no matter how hard the work would be. And luckily, while my husband was working for the Wallaces, which was quite a long time . . .

MK: For ten years.

OM: He worked for five or six years. And they really trusted him. And after I got married to him, I got pregnant with my first baby. And Mrs. Wallace told me not to worry about the delivery and what to do. During the delivery, she was with me, massaging my back, telling me that this part of the waist was supposed to hurt when the baby was coming out. And it was my first delivery . . .

MK: It was your first experience. It was in 1915.

OM: Yes. She was beside me, telling me, "Don't worry, don't worry," while she was massaging me. The misses [Mrs. Wallace] did that. There was not any midwife available then. But I'd asked a coffee farm woman [who was acting as midwife] to come. So when I had a discharge, I asked my husband to go and get her. But she wasn't at home. When my husband went there he was told to get her at the O-daishi-san [Buddhist temple], so he went to get her at the Odaishi-sama. And she came immediately. And on the 20th of August, the day of Odaishi-sama, a festival day, our oldest was born. I can't forget this day. He was born the night of that day. It was about 8 o'clock [p.m.] when he was born.

MK: You only had a midwife?

OM: Yes, a midwife, I mean, this woman came. Also, the haole lady, who kept massaging me and telling me, "It'll be finished soon since your back is hurting so much," or something like that. I didn't understand what she was saying since it was in English, you know. And my husband was told to stay with me since the delivery was taking a long time. So he was there too. And after this woman [midwife] came, she helped me. She told me not to worry and told me what to do. She held me from behind firmly, like this, right here [around the waist]. After she made me sit up, and the baby came out with a rush. But really, my back hurt so much that I wished it could be cut off. I heard that boy babies would make

your back hurt more than girl babies would, but I never knew it would hurt that much. It was a first baby, too, you know. The baby was born about 30 minutes after the woman came, on the 20th of August. Although when I was delivering him, I was cursing boys, since my back was hurting so much, after the baby was born, I was so thankful. Luckily the baby was a healthy one and my delivery was easy.

I rested for about a couple of weeks, and I started working little by little. I breastfed him, and all my other children, too. And Mr. Wallace gave us a bigger house now that there was a baby. Mr. Wallace was a luna at a big plantation. And he had a couple of horses. Mrs. Wallace and her daughter used to go out on horseback, since they didn't have a car then. And those horses were tied in a large field. I used to pick up the horse dung, you know I'm talking about, and throw it in the place where my husband told me. But the baby was growing, and he started to crawl. I used to tie him to two places outside with my sash, and go to pick up horse kūkae. And people could hear him cry. My husband was a cook at the Wallaces', and he used to come to tell me that the baby was crying. But I wanted to finish my work. And when I went back to him, he had cried himself to sleep, and his diaper was soaked. I felt so sorry for him. Mrs. Wallace felt sorry too and gave me a new job, embroidering pillowcases and tablecloths, you know. She brought her own, and her aikānes' also, to me to put some embroidery on. She brought yarn to me and taught me how to do it. And when I had finished a few napkins and handkerchiefs, my husband took them to her. She would say that they were very pretty and give my husband some more to take home. My husband told me that she liked my embroidery very much. So I started doing it more at home. And even though my husband told Mrs. Wallace that he didn't want to take money, since I was still learning and wasn't good enough to charge money for the work, it seems she insisted on the pay. So he brought money, a few dollars, to me. And pretty soon I was doing big tablecloths for those English people.

MK: And you got more skillful, little by little, how much money did she pay you for a table cloth?

OM: She brought me many different kinds of work, handkerchiefs, napkins, tablecloths, about this big--sometimes she gave me ten dollars, other times, five dollars. My husband brought the money. I told her that I was doing it because I wanted to practice embroidering and I didn't want any money. I was just glad that I could be some help to her, you know. When my husband first took what I had done to Mrs. Wallace, he told her that I had just come from Japan, and he wasn't sure if the work was satisfactory, and if it was, then I would be glad to do some more. Then, saying, "All right, all right," she brought a few more pieces out for me to work on. But when my baby started to crawl, and then to walk, I couldn't keep those things white, they got dirty since he would sometimes touch them; besides, the material was so thin, anyway. So I asked my husband if there were any other jobs for me, since now the baby had grown to crawl. Then a woman came and asked if I'd like to go and sort coffee beans at Napoopoo [Captain Cook Coffee Company].

MK: You mean at Captain Cook?

OM: Yes, to sort out coffee beans at the mill at Captain Cook. But I wasn't sure if I could do it. She told me it would be different from sewing kimonos and so on, but she thought it would be better for the baby, too. So I went with three other women--oba-san-tachi. It was good, but it turned out that I had to walk on a narrow, gravel road; I had to walk while carrying my baby, diapers, and a bentō. And it was quite a long walk. I would say it took an hour to go down, and then I'd have to go way, way down the road past a school on Napoopoo Road--because it was when we didn't have cars. We had to walk. We had to leave our homes very early but by the time we reached [the mill] it was 8 or 9 o'clock [a.m.]. On a table like this [gestures] we were all lined up. The others working there were Napoopoo women with families there. When the three of us from above [ma uka] came, they placed us three on a table like this . . .
(tape ends)

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 9-26-2-80 TR

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Osame Manago (OM)

December 15, 1980

Captain Cook, Kona, Hawaii

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

[Note: Interview conducted in Japanese. Translation done by Mako Mantzel.]

MK: Let's start with the coffee mill at Napoopoo where you worked.

OM: Yes. Yes.

MK: Please go ahead.

OM: I used to leave about 7 [o'clock] in the morning, carrying my baby on my back. He was a year old. I used to fix dango for him and a bento for myself. And with the other two women, Mrs. Fukuda, Mrs. Nakamoto and myself, all three of us oba-san-tachi went down below Marumoto's from the upper road to the lower steep gravel road. I had my baby on my back and a basket in my hand. That's how we used to go down [to Captain Cook Coffee Company Mill]. On the way we passed coffee trees and guava, and we sometimes slid down goro-goro, goro, two to three feet. And when we got down, we walked about a quarter of a mile to Napoopoo School. Then we had to walk down again from there. It was a steep, narrow, wet road. We had to walk that road to get down to the mill. It took two hours to go down the first part, then to Napoopoo School, and finally another to go down to the mill. During that walk, I had my baby on my back, you know. That's how the three of us used to go down. Sometimes, [at the mill] our kids fought with others. Since we didn't live there and they [the other coffee sorters] did, we felt awkward when they fought. So we used to tie our kids to the table with the obi which we used for carrying our kids on our backs.

MK: To chair?

OM: They were tied with those long obi. And our three kids, who were from up the hill, used to play together. They [Napoopoo resident workers] used to tell us things like, "Those kids who came from up the hill have a strong odor even in their urine." So we used to tell our kids to stay with us. We ate our bento there. And we had

to go up the hill when we went home. That was hard, since we'd worked so hard sorting coffee beans. We used to get 35 cents to do one bag. Thirty-five cents for sorting a bag full of coffee beans, some of which were squashed or split in half, or crumbled, and so on. It was 35 cents for one bag sorted. I could hardly do two bags.

MK: From what time to what time did you work?

OM: I worked from 9 [o'clock] or 8 [o'clock] in the morning to 3 [o'clock] in the afternoon. And we had to go up the steep road, carrying our kids on our backs. So we had to come up three roads to get back home. The three of us used to comfort each other in our hard work, "Yare, yare, kyō yatta, no. [Well, well, we did it today, didn't we.]" And it was only 70 cents a day.

MK: Were the workers all Japanese women?

OM: Yes, mostly Japanese but there was one Hawaiian. But those Japanese women had their own houses in the camp, the coffee camp. And they worked all year long, along with their husbands, everyone, together.

MK: So did you and Mrs. Fukuda and the other person work only in season?

OM: I went there because I heard about the job. I think I worked there about a month. And at the mill, when the boss found one bad coffee bean in a finished bag, I had to do it all over again, emptying the bag. So I ended up working over one bag twice, when I could have worked on two bags. It was really miserable at times like that. Besides, we had to keep our kids with us, because their kids bullied our kids, although our kids wanted to play with them. I quit since I was making only 70 cents a day, not to mention the troubles I had--the kids and the long walk. People told us that we should quit. So we all did.

There was a Mr. Shikada, whom my husband knew, who was an engineer at the camp. And he offered to let me stay at his house, since he knew how hard it was for me to go up and down, to and from work. I stayed at his house for about a week. But the wall of his house were not very thick, and when my child cried, I was worried about the neighbors. Although they didn't tell me directly, I thought I should go back home. And I started going to work from home. I really didn't think it was a suitable job for me. So I quit.

Shortly after that, my husband told me that we should go to Honolulu. That was all right with me. And when my husband told his boss [Mr. Wallace] that he wanted to go to Honolulu, the boss said that we needn't go to Honolulu, that we had a child to consider, and that we should start a coffee shop here instead of going to Honolulu. And he brought us \$100. And with that money, my husband bought some flour, sugar, and so forth, and learned how to make udon, and such. And in Honaunau, he bought a house in which the coffee beans used to be dried. He bought that house. He paid \$90 for it. And

we remodeled the house, dividing it into two parts, one for our bedroom, the other with a table for making and selling udon. It was as big as this room, very small.

MK: You mean twice as big as this 11-by-10-feet room?

OM: Yes, that's right, just twice as big as this room. There was a sink where I washed dishes, and I used to make udon there, too. We bought a tiny stove, I can't remember exactly how much my husband paid for it, but I think it was some \$30 or \$40.

MK: You mean a quarter of the room was the kitchen?

OM: Yes, it was really small. That's how we started.

MK: What kind of food did you sell, other than udon?

OM: We baked bread, about ten loaves a day sometimes. And we served udon and coffee. And we used to calculate our profits, which were two to three dollars a day, at the end of each day. After my husband found a person called Maezato-san as his replacement at the Wallaces, he came here to assist with the store. And since we didn't have gas or electricity then, we used lamps. Anyway, we needed firewood. So both of us had to work hard. Meanwhile, the coffee price went up and our bread sold well. We used to sell out all ten loaves in one day. And even the udon, out of the ten or twenty that we made, all would be sold. And we served two slices of bread with jam, since we didn't have butter, with a cup of coffee, which was five cents. And we were making a profit of three to five dollars a day.

And above our houselot, there was a stable where there were a lot of bachelors, but not so many women. I used to do some laundry for them when I went to take my bath. I paid for the bath and did the laundry with the leftover water. I washed a shirt for five cents, three underpants for ten cents. And, being bachelors, they used to wear the same underwear for ten days, you know. I used to wash those things.

MK: What kind of people were your customers?

OM: A lot of them were the bachelors at the stable. They used to come when they were hungry and have some udon or coffee or such. And when they didn't want to cook supper, they used to come and eat udon and so forth.

MK: How did they start coming to your coffee shop at first?

OM: After we started our shop, they first came on Sundays, just to see what it was like. And there weren't any shops like ours there then, it was convenient for them. When they didn't want to cook at home, they came to eat at our shop because it was much easier for them that way. My husband sometimes had to make extra udon when we sold out the 20 udon we'd made for the day. He used to say, "Really,

did we sell that many today, okay, I'll start making some more," and he'd start making it, using a big knife we'd bought.

MK: Where did you buy things like flour, oil and so forth, at that time?

OM: There was a big shop at Captain Cook [Coffee Company]. And there was another small store, which Goto-san owned, nearby. We used to buy small items from Goto's shop, and big quantities, like 15 to 20 kilograms of flour, from the Captain Cook store. And Marumoto-san the lawyer [Masaji Marumoto] family, had a big store. We went there sometimes to buy ten to twenty kilograms of flour and five to ten kilograms of sugar. So we started with bread, udon and coffee, and made money at first. And we also did laundry in the evenings for the bachelors. When the shop was done for the evening, my husband and I washed the laundry and I did the ironing. And there were mechanics who worked at the big garage at Captain Cook. We washed their clothes, too, since their own misses didn't want to wash them, they were so greasy. We used hot water with soap, which wasn't white like nowadays, but red, and which were so big that we had to cut them in pieces. We worked so hard that sometimes we didn't know the difference between day and night. Since the coffee price was good, people came to have coffee, udon and bread. Bread sometimes used to be sold so quickly that my husband would have to bake more, in addition to the loaves he'd already baked. We sold them for ten cents per serving. And we made more profit, little by little, from five dollars to ten dollars, like that.

And when our second girl was born, I couldn't manage taking care of her and the kitchen at the same time, not to mention finding room to sleep. So we had to build another room, which we made our bedroom, above us was the kitchen. And that was much better than before, having more space. There were two bedrooms, a kitchen where we made udon and a place where we served coffee and udon. One bench was all there was, so on one end somebody drank coffee, and on the other end, somebody else ate udon.

Above here there used to be a large Paris Hotel. People used to come to Kona to sell all sorts of things but the drivers for these people couldn't stay with them [at the Paris Hotel]. And since they didn't have any place to stay, they asked me if they could stay at our shop for a cheap price. So we bought a couple of small single beds and put them in the extra space we had, and we started letting those drivers stay.

MK: Paris...

OM: Yes. The Paris Hotel.

MK: You mean the drivers stayed at your restaurant instead of the Paris Hotel?

OM: Yes.

MK: That's how the Manago Hotel started, in 1917?

OM: Yes, that's right, that's how we started first. And when the rooms were full, we put futon on the floor for others to sleep on. I told my husband that this is a good business, and that we should add a second floor to have more rooms. And we divided one room into two, with six tatami mats in the front room. And we advertised that we had a Japanese room. It became popular and everybody came. And when people had to have meetings, such as the [American] Factors, [Theo H.] Davies and Co., our coffee farmers, they chose our place and ate at our place. There was a painter who was from Niigata-ken, who was a very good cook. I asked him if he wanted to help our restaurant when he was free. He said he would. We offered him free room and board. With his help, ten to twenty people started having parties at our place. Business was very good, and we started selling sake, beer and so forth. And after work, coffee picking, people started coming to have a drink, since it was cold in the evenings, you know. We charged 50 cents for a cup of sake. And our business was growing, little by little.

MK: How much did you charge for a party?

OM: Well, in those days for a party, \$1.50 for a batch of fish, \$2.00 for cooked fish in soy sauce, \$2.00 for a plate of barbecue meat; 50 cents for vegetables, we charged a quarter when they had namasu. So we didn't have the prices fixed.

MK: How much did you charge per day for those who stayed in your hotel?

OM: It was one dollar a day. A Honolulu man who worked for (phrase not clear), I can't remember his name, he's dead now, anyway, he used to stay with us. And another man, an insurance salesman from Honolulu, I can't remember his name, a tall man, I think he had been a schoolteacher; he used to stay in our hotel and sell life insurance in Kona, but he liked our hotel very much.

MK: Were they all Japanese, the ones who stayed at your hotel?

OM: Yes, mostly Japanese. And foreigners, the Portuguese came, with big trucks with sample for the big shops; they were very strong. They were from [Theo H.] Davies.

MK: Were there any tourists then?

OM: Yes, there were. Some people came with lots of \$20 bills, I can show you the pictures, when they had a bonus at the sugar plantation. About seven of them used to come in one truck, taking a whole day to get to our place from Honokaa. They would have supper at our place, buy some bentō, and go on to Hilo. It took a day to get to Hilo. There was Nakano Chaya [a restaurant] between Kona and Hilo, that's where they ate lunch. That was the second day. And they went from Hilo to Honokaa, where they stayed overnight, and spent one more night elsewhere as they went around the island.

It took four nights to make a round trip of the island. And the roads were rough, with lots of rocks. In those days, the tires were airless, not like the ones nowadays. That's the way it was. And we didn't have iceboxes then, they used to bring ice to our place on trucks. We used to keep fish that way, using the ice they brought, since we didn't have an icebox.

MK: During those days, did you buy things at those small stores, or at the [American] Factors?

OM: Yes, you're right. We had to buy items to do those things. It wasn't easy to serve the customers while doing housework. But thanks to customers who spread the word that they could eat good food any time at the Managos', we were doing pretty well. And when the Kona coffee business got big, several companies from Hilo, Honolulu and elsewhere started sending their order-takers. We expanded the fourth room because we were short of rooms. After the expansion, we had about nine or ten rooms.

MK: That was about 1927, wasn't it?

OM: Yes. We went to Japan in 1929. We were able to go since we had some money saved up through all our hard work. My father sent me a letter saying that he wanted to see our children; he had only girls, five of them, you know. So I told my husband about it and he said that it would be a good idea, that we would get some help for the hotel, although it was busy. Since we were going to be gone during April, May and June, we had to take winter clothes and summer clothes. We took three trunks and a suitcase, some of which were filled with clothes I ordered from Honolulu and Hilo through order-takers. My eldest was fourteen, my girl was twelve, and the youngest, a seven-month-old, I carried.

MK: So you went to Japan?

OM: Yes, the baby was seven months old. Mr. Yonekura, who was with the Hawaii Hochi offered to watch over the management. We hired cooks. And we asked a friend of ours, Ishida-san, who was a teacher at Napoopoo School, to become the manager. We asked him because he was our friend. We told them that they didn't have to make money, all they had to do was to keep the business going. Mr. Frank Arakawa, who was a construction engineer for the government and who happened to be staying at our hotel, offered to help take care of the hotel while we were gone. He also sent us some documents which we needed to come back from Japan. So we went to Japan for three months. We bought so many clothes since people from Honolulu and Hilo recommended that we buy. The shoes we had been wearing were not good, since they were all handed down; our clothes were the same way. All the order-takers wanted to sell goods from their own stores in Honolulu, or Hilo. So we bought and went.

MK: And you went to Japan . . .

OM: I had sent a letter to my father that we were coming. He was so excited about receiving my husband in his home for the first time that he had my husband's haori and hakama and a set of kimono ready for me. My father was so glad to see us, saying how happy and thankful he was. My father said that seeing the children was worth more than a house filled with gold, and he cried, even though he was a man. I had a seven-month-old baby and others that had been born one after the other, you know.

Kyushu is detached from Honshu, and in those days there was a steamboat transport between those two islands, which were separated by a deep sea. And in order to get to Kyushu, we had to get on this steamboat, and we had to carry all the baggage. We had big suitcases. My husband could only carry one at a time, and I had a seven-month-old baby in my arms. We had made cards which had our addresses in Hawaii and in Japan, and put them in the pockets of all the children. In Japan, people don't offer a seat to a woman. It doesn't make any difference if you are a man or a woman.

MK: Yes. I understand.

OM: That was 50 years ago. People were so rude that they pushed and shoved in order to get ahead, with no regard for a woman with a baby and small children. I felt so bad that time when we crossed the sea. I had to keep telling my children never to let their hands go. I almost felt that I had to knot their hands in order to keep them together.

MK: Hand in hand . . .

OM: So after we crossed, we took a train to go home. There were lots of people waiting to greet us at the station. They said how glad they were to see us, and praised us for our determined effort to bring the children back home. And when we got home, all the neighbors came to see us. They told us that they were glad to see us all, and to see that all eight of us had made it all right. And a month or so after that, I received letters from Hawaii telling us that there was a hotel being built next to ours.

MK: Who was building the hotel?

OM: Yamashita-san was, he was from Kumamoto-ken. The one next to ours is what I'm talking about, that house. Ours is right here, his is right there. He built it as tall as ours. Our friends write, warning that they [new hotel builders] were going to take our business away, that we had to get back home as soon as we could. I told my husband that we must get back home, since we didn't want our friends to worry. And I thought my father was satisfied now that he had seen all our children, although we'd been there only a month.

And after we got back from my sister's house, where we had been invited for a farewell dinner, we noticed something was going on in the main room of my father's house. We heard singing and wondered

what was going on. It was my parents singing for my little one. They had a pair of zōri which were made for my little one by an 88-year-old man. It was a ceremony to wish her a long life. My father and mother were glad that the ceremony was conducted, and they said that the child would live long. They'd had a small family, just my parents and my sister and her husband, with no child. And when the eight of us came, the house was full of people and became cheerful. My mother said to me that she wouldn't know what to do when we were gone, that it would be like a typhoon had gone by. She begged me to stay, asking if I really had to go. I told her that I had to go because of the letter, and that I would come back again after the kids got bigger.

I got into the car with the little one in my arms and sat next to my husband in the front seat. We had to hire two to three cars in order to get everybody in, with all the luggage. My little one was asleep when my sister came and said that the baby was so young that she couldn't tell who her mother was, that I should leave her with my mother. My sister said that my mother would feel so sad when we left that she would go crazy or become sick, that I should leave the baby with her. And she took my baby and carried her away into a shrine nearby. I felt then that I shouldn't have come back if I'd known that I would have to leave my baby behind. I didn't know what to do.

MK: You were sad, I imagine.

OM: I left for Hawaii against their will; I realized how sad my mother was, and understood how she felt about my children. After all, I had many children, I thought I could leave one child with her. I told myself it would be okay. And since we had to hurry, we left for Kurume Station. My sisters came to see us off at the station. They thought I would be lonely, so they came along with us to Kyoto. They didn't even bring a change of clothes. They came because they thought I would be lonely, leaving my baby behind, although they had planned to say goodbye at Kurume Station. My two sisters wanted to keep me company. We stayed in Kyoto for a week. When my milk dripped through my thin kimono, my sisters cried, saying that the baby must be hungry, and they were so sorry for the baby and me. So without telling me, my sister called home to check on the baby. And my mother apparently told my sister that the baby had drunk milk and was sleeping very well. She was less than ten months old, you know. When she told me she was doing okay, I thought, as long as she was drinking milk well, she should be all right.

After staying in Kyoto for a week, we went to Yokohama, where we were to get on a ship. I still had all the baby's clothes in the trunk. My sisters bought some clothes for themselves in Kyoto, since they hadn't brought any change of clothes, and they came along to Yokohama. Anyway, we stayed in Yokohama for three nights, and when we were about to leave, I told them about my baby's clothes. Then through a telegram from Fukuoka, they asked me whether my sister's husband should bring the baby to Yokohama, if I couldn't

bear leaving the baby. I told them I was sure that the baby was going to be cared for very well since the baby was the only child in the house. I told them that I must give her away. So it was then I gave them the baby clothes. I was very sad, but I also thought of the time I left my mother to come to Hawaii. I owed her for that, and I had to pay her back. I thought I had to do that for her.

Once in a while, though, I thought of the child, and imagined how the child was doing, and I felt I shouldn't have gone to Japan. They often sent me pictures of the child, telling me how well the child was growing, thanks to my parents and sisters. And when we got back to Hawaii, the other [competitor's] hotel had been built, and they were having noisy parties.

MK: Can you tell me about the present hotel? I mean, Mr. Frank Arakawa . . .

OM: Yes. Mr. Frank Arakawa came when we got back. He told me that I should cut down all the coffee trees which were on our land, and that he would draw a design for the hotel. He also told us that he would help us to expand the Manago Hotel on the land, including the land next to our hotel. He brought the design and said we should buy the coffee land from the owner, who was Mori-san. So we asked him about it, and he said, "All right, I'll cut the trees and you may have as much land as you want." So we took the land between this house and that house. And we had to have a street between our hotel and his [the competitor's]. We shared the street, each giving five feet. And this is the house we built then, without leaving any of the land empty.

MK: That was right after you'd gotten back from Japan. You must have needed a lot of money. How did you manage?

OM: Yes. When we went to Japan, we borrowed \$6,000 from a bank. And when we got back, we had to build our hotel. We had a coffee field below our hotel, so we were going to get a mortgage on the land from a bank. But a person who my husband leased the land to had taken the land document to [American] Factors and had borrowed money on it. We were very upset, but there was nothing we could do. So we started a tanomoshi.

MK: How much money?

OM: I think it was ten dollars apiece. We decided to make 30 shares. But people told us that they would be our guarantors, so we should borrow money from a bank instead. So we borrowed money from Bank of Hawaii and we started building our hotel. [Theo. H.] Davies, [American] Factors and other contractors made bids. After seeing the plan that Mr. Arakawa had drawn, which showed rooms here, rooms there and so forth, Davies got the contract. And after negotiating, they understood that we didn't have much money, since we had just made a trip to Japan and they offered a deal where we wouldn't have to pay for the lumber right then, but would pay later, with a

little interest. And the bank agreed to the deal. And for the actual building, Yamane-san was the contractor for Davies, and we had to pay some \$20,000 to do what we wanted, which was to add a new hotel to the old one. The wages for the carpenter were about three dollars a day then, four dollars for a foreman, and two to three dollars for a workman. We provided room and board, in a hiroma [large room]. We also told them that they must build without our having to stop our hotel business. And they didn't stop our business. But then the prices of coffee, which was once 17 cents to 19 cents, went way down, to ten cents. And there were many people who wanted to quit the coffee business. And we were living on their coffee business, you know. We were in trouble, and finally my husband went to work for a haole who used to live beside the road to Napoopoo.

MK: Do you remember the name of the haole?

OM: David Paris, it was. Twenty-eight dollars, one month. He [Manago] left early in the morning and didn't come home until 8 [o'clock] at night. His salary was \$28 a month.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

MK: Go ahead, please.

OM: He [Manago] used to come home late. At this haole home there was an unmarried haole, Wallace's aikāne, an Englishman. My husband started doing laundry for him. My husband did the laundry after he came home, and [he did] the ironing in the morning. And during the afternoon kaukau time [at the Parises'], when he had about 30 minutes, he collected and delivered the laundry in a basket to the white person's house. He did that and repeated it each week. So he used to wash and sometimes iron at night, while I was cooking for our children. And the children, four or five of them when they got old enough, started to work picking coffee at Goto-san's place. We used to tell them to go pick coffee to earn some money after they came home from school. My daughters had to help clean up the kitchen, take care of the younger children, bathe them or whatever needed doing. And we were all so busy that my daughters sometimes didn't bathe for four or five days. Some people told us that we should take better care of our daughters, especially because they were girls.

MK: How long did your husband work for the Parises?

OM: Well, a year, maybe, I think.

MK: Was it during the hardest times?

OM: Yes. It was when the coffee price went way, way down, and there were hardly any coffee buyers. Nobody was buying. (OM's daughter-in-law offers refreshments. Taping stops, then resumes.)

MK: So your husband was working for the Parises for a year and a half or two?

OM: Yes, for \$28, only \$28 a month.

MK: What kind of services did you provide at this [Manago] hotel, then?

OM: Well, I just had to make do with whatever I had. Sometimes I cooked fish, nishime, and kōkō. And miso soup. People used to say, "Good food," when they ate [at the hotel] after coming back from work.

MK: You mentioned that there were some order-takers from Hilo and elsewhere, didn't you?

OM: Yes, there were. They came. And when the war [World War II] started . . .

MK: Before we get into talking about the war, I would like to ask you about those ten or so years between 1929 and 1941. How was your business during that time?

OM: Business was pretty good. And those order-takers used to come. I used to manage the hotel until my husband quit working [for the Parises]. My husband worked [there] for about a year and a half. I was so busy he had to help me, washing sheets and pillowcases, and helping the cook. Of course, he [Manago] was very good at cooking. We used to cook American food and Japanese food, and sometimes we had a mixed menu.

MK: Did you have a maid then?

OM: No, never; we did it all by ourselves. We asked our children for help.

MK: What kind of help did they give you?

OM: We told them to dry the dishes, to sweep and mop, and to take care of the little ones. They bathed the young ones and helped them get ready for school the next day. They had their clothes ready, next to their pillows, before they went to bed. We let the boys do girls' work also. We used to let them do everything, even wash and iron.

MK: And also, they went to Goto-san's to pick coffee?

OM: Yes, they did. They took a lighted lantern with them [early in the morning]. We used to send them to work again after they had had supper, to dry coffee after the coffee was washed. Along with the Gotos' relatives, they used to help Mr. and Mrs. Goto since they

needed young people's help. My children regarded Goto-san's house as their own. So my children didn't go out to play after they came home. They either helped at home or went to pick coffee, since money was money, even if they could pick only one bag full.

MK: So the whole family worked hard.

OM: Yes. More than I can say. We really worked hard. It got a little better after we built the fourth hotel, but, until then, we often worked with empty stomachs.

MK: So about this fourth hotel, how many rooms were there?

OM: How many rooms? Eight, or about ten, I think.

MK: Were they pretty much full?

OM: Sometimes we didn't have enough rooms when people who were traveling around the island came. But ten rooms were usually enough to put up all the order-takers and others. And we used to let people sleep in our rooms when we didn't have an empty room. I don't remember whether it was then or not, but anyway, when a lot of order-takers came at the same time, we used to put futon on goza on the floor, not to mention using our boys' and girls' rooms.

MK: Which months were the busiest?

OM: Well, the beginning of each month was the busiest. They [order-takers] used to write down what day of what month they would return, and how long their stay would be, on the office blackboard right before they left. And we used to reserve rooms accordingly. I could manage the hotel with only those order-takers, we didn't have to have new customers.

MK: During the years of 1929 to 1941, were the customers always about the same people, or did they change?

OM: They were almost always the same people. Except when a company sent a different order-taker, or when an order-taker quit, and a new one would take over. They used to introduce themselves and explain that the one who used to come had quit, and so they would be coming from now on.

MK: Between 1929 and 1941, how much did the room rate go up, in those ten years or so? After you'd finished the fourth hotel, how much was the room rate, before the war?

OM: (OM mishears question) I had hired a workman for the rooms. And there were many girls who wanted to work for me. Since they lived on the coffee farms, they didn't have jobs, except for occasional coffee picking. So their mothers used to bring those girls to me to see if I had any work for them. And they didn't ask for much pay.

MK: About how many girls came? You were talking about the room maids, aren't you?

OM: I usually had two, two on the morning shift, two on the afternoon shift. And the ones in the afternoon shift stayed over till morning. I used to pay them about \$20 a month.

MK: About the customers who were order-takers . . .

OM: Yes, they were mostly order-takers.

MK: How much did they have to pay per day?

OM: It was \$1.50 a day per room.

MK: Was that around 1929?

OM: Yes.

MK: How about in 1941?

OM: When we built that building, we raised the rate, so we raised it to \$2.00 a night, from \$1.50, I think, in this building. And the food was--75 cents for breakfast, and about \$1.00 for supper. I think it came to about \$5.00 a day. Or \$5.50. When we started originally, there was a room for 50 cents. That was when we had only two rooms.

MK: When you first started.

OM: Yes. But you got what you paid for, they were iron beds and weren't very comfortable, then. And the house we bought didn't have a decent roof. We put a tin roof on, but when it rained, it leaked. An insurance salesman from Honolulu, Mr. Kyohei Inouye, who had been a longtime customer of ours, for ten years, was staying one night.

He called me, "Mama, mama," during the night.

I asked him, "What's wrong?"

He said, "Do something, the rain is leaking in." So I took a pail to him and we moved the bed. And he called me again: this time the bed had fallen in.

I asked him, "How did it happen?" What had happened was that when we had moved the bed, we hadn't put back the boards which fit the ends of the bed--we got this bed [free] from a haole, anyway, when he got on the bed, he went just like this (laughs).

MK: Oh, he fell down.

OM: Yes. Just like that. I had to apologize to him. The boards were supposed to be put straight, but we put them sideways. So when he got on the bed, he went down like this.

MK: He fell down.

OM: Yes, in the middle of the night. Although we have good beds nowadays, beds in those days were so bad that it hurt. But people didn't sleep on beds, usually they slept on the floor, so it was all right. Yes. Those were the days when things were terrible.

MK: There were times when the coffee price went down before the war, in 1937 or 1940.

OM: Yes, but the coffee price came back up again. It went up steadily, up to 10 cents and 15 cents. And because of that, we had a lot of order-takers coming, and our business started to grow again. And we were short of rooms. We had to move our children out of our bedroom downstairs, which we'd arrange for them to sleep in, and let them sleep on the floor. It was that crowded.

MK: So your business was good when coffee was high.

OM: Yes. Definitely. That's how we paid off the lumber and the debt to [Theo. H.] Davies. And we still owed a lot of money when the war started. I asked Yamane-san to wait for his payment, since we didn't have money. We told him that we would pay him back with interest. He said that I shouldn't worry, that it wasn't our fault that the war [World War II] had started and business had gone down. He also said that I not only shouldn't think about payment but should hope for the future.

MK: Why did you have debts during the war?

OM: Because we had built more hotels [remodeled], adding to this one. And we had made a contract. Yamane-san was the contractor. [Theo. H.] Davies was responsible for the lumber for the building. We were paying Davies little by little every month. But we had to pay some money down to Yamane-san, the contractor. Since we didn't have money, we borrowed from a bank, with a guarantor, and paid some to Yamane-san.

MK: Although you'd paid some, you still had debts.

OM: Yes, we sure did, quite a lot.

MK: So, when World War II started, what happened to the hotel?

OM: At that time, my daughter had just gone to a women's college in Japan, after graduating from high school. And my eldest son had gone to Cincinnati, Ohio, to go to a medical school to become a doctor. He enrolled there on the advice of a doctor who said it was a good school. He went to Mills Institute [Mid-Pacific Institute] in Honolulu all the way and then later he went to Cincinnati. It was hoped that he would be a doctor at the Kona Japanese Hospital--together with his brother who had been adopted by a doctor. But we didn't know there would be a war. So I had

sent my girl to Japan and my boy to Cincinnati, Ohio--with the intention of making him a doctor. And another boy was being sent to the University [University of Hawaii] after he finished high school here. So we sent three children to college. Then war started.

When the war started, my daughter couldn't go back [to Japan]. She'd come back in December, 1939. She worked for the [Japan] Foreign Ministry for a while. And she wanted to go to Washington University to study shorthand. And the war started in 1940 [1941]. So she couldn't go back to Japan. Since she worked for the Foreign Ministry, she was suspected of being a spy who had come back to Hawaii with some sort of secret information. But anyway, she went to Washington University to study, since there was no chance for her to return to Japan. She studied in Washington.

MK: What happened to the hotel in Kona?

OM: We had to close it up. We couldn't do anything. I don't know how they [soldiers and heavy equipment] came from America; but they were out there with the sounds of big trucks and cannon passing in the dark. The cannon, the horses and the soldiers were passing in front of our house. They occupied Konawaena School. So after they went into Konawaena School everything was used by them. We didn't want any light to be seen, so we covered the windows with 'āhina. There was Julian Yates who was with the military. His uncle used to be a general in the past. Anyway, when the first American troops came in, the general of the troops and the general [Julian Yates' uncle] here came to our hotel. And the generals asked us to feed the soldiers when they came to the hotel, since they didn't have any place to go when they were off duty. They also wanted to come here when they didn't want to eat at the camp. They asked us to serve the soldiers first when they came to eat. And this Kona general, an uncle of Julian Yates, said that we could get as much food as we needed from either [Theo. H.] Davies or [American] Factors. He told me that he would give them my name so I could order. He assured me that I would get enough food and get whatever I wanted from any place. He gave me a permit.

MK: Did the soldiers pay when they ate?

OM: Yes, they did, since they were salaried. They had plenty of money, but they didn't have any place to drink or eat. They were soldiers who came to fight the war. A steak used to be a dollar, but we charged them only 75 cents. It cost us that much, so we didn't make any money.

MK: How could you manage like that, if you didn't have any profit?

OM: I told Julian Yates' [uncle], the general, that I wanted to raise the price, that I couldn't make any money if I charged only 75 cents. He told me that we should raise the price if that was the case. So we raised it to one dollar. That was for a T-bone steak, I mean, a big T-bone steak, as big as a plate. We charged one

dollar for a T-bone steak with rice or bread, and coffee. But this was still so cheap that lots of people came, even from Waimea, when they were off duty. So almost all the T-bone steaks were brought here to me from the supermarket.

The only thing I worried about was the girls who worked for me. I was always watching them to see if they were bothered by soldiers. The girls were all Japanese, and I didn't want them to get hurt. I really had to watch them, since the soldiers were always asking for girls. Lots of kanakas made money. Those who sold hot shōchū [low-class distilled spirits] in Coca-Cola bottles in front of our hotel made money. They sold diluted ones for three to five dollars. Some drank a mixture of gasoline and Coca-Cola. It was during the war, you know.

MK Did you take in any customers at the hotel during those four years?

OM: No, no customers at all. We couldn't take any customers. People from this area could only go as far as Honaunau. We couldn't go beyond that. And in the other direction, Kailua, Kona was as far as we could go. So we couldn't go any place. An order-taker had to stay at my hotel for a month because he couldn't get out. He had [U.S.] citizenship, and he asked the general if he could go back to Honolulu. There was no other way but by American military plane or ship, so when the ship came, a soldier took him to Hilo. That's how he went back to Honolulu.

MK: So there weren't many people who came to stay,

OM: No, not at all.

MK: For four years.

OM: Yes. But there were lots of soldiers who had furloughs in Honolulu. They got furloughs after fighting and being in the army for some time, you know, and those soldiers didn't just stay in Honolulu. Some wanted to see the other islands. And there were others who were having days off, or who had been transferred. After they arrived in Hilo, they used to come to our place, since our place was halfway between Hilo and Honolulu. They stopped at our place. They used to come in a five-cent bus, all twelve of them, and stay at our hotel overnight, and next morning, they'd go on to their destinations. When one group left, another group would arrive; people were coming and going all the time.

And they [military] wanted to have a contract with us. Since we didn't have any other customers, we signed the contract. They sent a person, a boss, who took charge of the accounting. He paid us according to what they owed, for dinner, breakfast, and so forth. So our business started to grow again. They used to call us when they had a big party, a couple of buses, coming. We had to get ready for them. We put a couple of beds in each room.

MK That's how you did it.

OM: And the Japanese girls quit because they were afraid of the Americans, so we hired Hawaiians who liked soldiers. They came in the morning and went home at night. Some kanaka girls stayed over. And we made enough money to pay the contractor, Yamane-san. And when he died, we gave \$100 as a token of condolence. We paid back the money with some interest as well. We had enough money to pay him back. We were doing well. As for [Theo. H.] Davies, the lumber debt, we paid that little by little, monthly, from the money we saved. So, although we lost our regular business because of the war, it [war] gave us soldiers and we could make a lot of money, thanks to them. And we paid back all our debts. Mr. Frank Arakawa was fluent in English, since he was born in Hawaii, but he was proud of being a Japanese at the same time; anyway, he took care of people--Japanese military personnel, consuls, priests and so forth--when they came to Hawaii.

MK: Was that before or after the war?

OM: He was the one who drew a design for our hotel.

MK: Was he helping before the war?

OM: Yes. Before the war. He was a big shot. I think he was the first Japanese who went to a school of engineering in America. He is over 80 years old now. He was a big shot in Hilo. He did all the building work, both private and public.

MK: He was the one who built your hotel in 1929.

OM: After he started staying at our hotel, we became aikānes. He was also a good friend of the doctor.

MK: You mean Dr. Sugamura?

OM: Yes. He was a good friend of Dr. Sugamura. Anyway, he kokuaed us a lot.

MK: I would like to ask a little about events after the war. The coffee price went up after the war, didn't it?

OM: Yes, it did.

MK: How was your business, since the coffee went up?

OM: It also got better. But all the boys and girls left for Honolulu, since the pay was so much better there. A carpenter was being paid three dollars a day here then, but he could get three dollars an hour in Honolulu.

MK: After the war?

OM: Yes. And I couldn't hire people. All there was left around here was old people and children. Only old people and children were left [in Kona]. We used to dig holes for burials before cremation became popular, you know.

MK: So things changed after the war.

OM: Yes. All the young people left here to go to Honolulu.

MK: What happened to your hotel business?

OM: Well, even after the war, since there were still quite a few soldiers coming in and out, we were doing okay. And the community was growing; there were a lot of houses being built. So lots of order-takers came, and our business grew.

Three of my children went to the war, including the one who is a dentist. And when the one who'd been working in America came home--and was going to college in Honolulu then--we changed the ownership of the hotel to his name [Harold Manago], since it would have been confiscated if it were in our name, since we [OM and husband] were Japan-born. He became a teacher after graduating, thinking he wouldn't be drafted if he became a teacher. But he was drafted. He joined the military, leaving his wife and their two-month-old baby. The dentist son went to Italy, the other one went to France, and the third one went to America. And when they all met, they sent a picture to us.

MK: And after they returned from the war . . .

OM: After the war, they all came home to help the hotel. The oldest son was in a camp, you know those [internment or relocation] camps for Japanese, he was helping there, being a teacher, teaching English to the old people.

MK: After the war, Harold took care of the hotel, is that right?

OM: Yes. His wife was here all that time, and I had been training her. So we gave the hotel to him.

MK: What year was that?

OM: That was when the war started. 1940, was it? In about 1941, a policeman came to tell me that the hotel would be confiscated, since I was Japan-born, that I should change the ownership to his [Harold's] name. So I did in 1941. His wife was born in Hawaii also, and was a hard working girl, so I felt I should give the hotel to them, and I did.

MK: So you worked hard to build this hotel. You've been in business for quite a long time here in Kona. When you think of your life, the life that you've lived, how do you feel?

OM: It's amazing that we could work so hard. My husband and I must have been made out of steel, we both have been so healthy that we haven't been ill at all. He was healthy and I was healthy. We brought up our children unspoiled; all my children worked hard, picking coffee, cutting firewood, doing laundry, ironing and cleaning, and helping me, whether they were boys or not. They used to have to lay out their clothes beside the bed every night to wear to school the next day. I used to hear about new movie theaters being built, but we didn't go even once in the first 15 years. It was only later that we got to go out. That's how hard we worked.

MK: So your personal history is . . .

OM: Yes. That's my real history. (Taping interrupted, interview ends.)

END OF INTERVIEW

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF KONA

Volume I

ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**Ethnic Studies Program
University of Hawaii, Manoa**

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